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**Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, March 3,  
1820, from Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe  
Correspondence, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W.  
Gawalt, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

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**Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe**

Monticello Mar. 3. 20.

Dear Sir

I am often placed under the dilemma of either abandoning my old friends or of giving you the trouble of reading a letter and I have had too many proofs of your friendship not to know you will take that trouble to save me from a painful an alternative. I know our difficulties and after giving my testimony, I pay no attention to the result, leaving that to yourself who alone have a view of the whole ground. Christopher Ellery the subject of the inclosed letter from Mr. Collins was one of the most active of our friends in R. I. In the times of our trials whether our government should be republican in practice as well as profession. He came into the Senate when I came into the administration and assisted in giving us a majority in that body, nor was there a more zealous or active one in it. He is a good republican, a good man and of good understanding.

I am indebted to you for your two letters of Feb.7 & 19. This Missouri question by a geographical line of division is the most portentous one of however contemplated. King is ready to risk the union for any chance of restoring his party to power and wriggling himself to the head of it. Nor is Clinton without his hopes nor scrupulous as to the means

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of fulfilling them. I hope I shall be spared the pain of witnessing it either by the good sense of the people, only the more certain reliance, the hand of death on this or that side of the Styx. I am ever and devotedly yours. Th. Jefferson

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